WCBW Interview

Interviewer: Hey, how you doin'?

> *Rich Mullins: I'm doin' pretty good.*

Interviewer: I hear you're just getting back from Europe. How was that? And tell us how the response was over there.

> *Rich Mullins: Well, it was a blast. We were there all summer. We were there for three months, and we spent the first month in Ireland, which is... I have no way to describe Ireland.*

Interviewer: Violent? No, no that's the other side of Ireland, I'm sure.

> *Rich Mullins: No, it was wonderful. The people were wonderful. We just had a great time. Of course, it's kind of...*

Interviewer: Let me interrupt with just one thought on that. You know, most people think of Ireland and they think of the, Northern Ireland, I guess, as far as the violence, the explosions, the terrorism. Did you encounter any of that this week, or this past summer?

> *Rich Mullins: No, in fact the violence is limited to just a few blocks. And there **are** ousts, terrorist acts, and that kind of thing. But there are plane crashes in the United States, so I figure you are going to die sooner or later. I certainly wouldn't be in support of acts of terrorism, but you kind of go, "If I died in Ireland, I think I would be happy with that."*

Interviewer: Yeah, okay, I understand that.

> *Rich Mullins: But I didn't worry too much. It was kind of weird. We accidentally crossed the border into Northern Ireland one night late, and it was a little bit of a weird feeling, having guys aim guns at your car.*

Interviewer: Wow! But as Christians we shouldn't worry as much. Still, I'm sure you sweated just a little bit...

> *Rich Mullins: Well, I'll tell you, I look forward to heaven, and I can't think of a single problem that Christ coming back or my dying wouldn't solve for me. But I like being alive awfully much down here, so I'm certainly not going to do anything to hurry the process forward.*

Interviewer: How was the reception in Ireland, and then, once you were in Europe? We want to hear about that, too.

> *Rich Mullins: Well, Ireland was great because they really like music. In fact, musicians live tax-free in Ireland.*

Interviewer: I'm surprised that U2 ever left the country, then.

> *Rich Mullins: They still live there, so they don't pay taxes. The Irish people really like music. And because so much of my music has an Irish influence and they're very proud of their Irish heritage, we were very well received, as well as by many of the... most of the time we didn't have a Christian audience... many of the people all over Europe. There is such a darkness there. It's really kind of an oppressive place, and people were very anxious to find out about Christianity. When we were in Hungary... we spent much of our time in a school in Hungary, where, I think almost nothing could... none of the kids were Christians, even professing Christians... and we spent most of the time hanging out with some kids and answering questions. And most of the questions had to do with God and Who He is. So there's a real curiosity.*

Interviewer: It's also interesting, Rich, that even though there are so many churches in Europe, it's just not **there** as far as a personal relationship with Christ. It's more of a 'non-personal God' type approach of church, isn't it?

> *Rich Mullins: It's not a Judeo-Christian kind of God. And that's a very depressing thing. One very frightening thing in Northern Europe is their view of God. They picture Him as 'the Eagle', [that God is beautiful and majestic. They have an immense reverence for Him, but think of him as living way above humanity. He looks down and watches us closely, but is not right here in the midst of our lives giving us free access to Him at all times. They use the eagle quite a bit in their architecture for that reason.] The architecture is fabulous, and there is **such** an order, and thinking about it just... there is so much, it's such an educational tool, and such an opportunity for parents to talk to the kids. Because the architecture of these churches is based on Christian thinking, on the idea that there is order in the universe, that there is symmetry and there are asymmetrical things within that symmetry, and there's all this stuff going on...then we went to an art academy and looked at some of the modern art, which was full of chaos and violence and confusion. And it was, not only was it 'not beautiful' to look at, but it was not even 'good' violence.*

Interviewer: Right. Well, it sounds like it was a life-changing trip for you. And as far as the reception, you felt like people really opened up in parts of Europe as well, then, not just in Ireland?

> *Rich Mullins: Right, all over. The Christian people who are in Europe are so outnumbered. And their fate is... in this country we have Christian radio, we have a lot of Christian music, we have a lot of things that tell people, "It's okay to be a Christian. You're not alone." Over there, they don't have that. They are very anxious to find out that they are not alone in their faith. So it was really fun to get to talk to Christians and say, "Where we live, there are a lot of people who believe like you do. Maybe you're crazy, but you are not alone."*

Interviewer: Sounds like the Lord really blessed that trip, Rich. What are your plans now that you are back in America? What's next?

> *Rich Mullins: Well, I'm finishing up a degree in music education and hoping in about three or four years to be a school teacher.*

Interviewer: Okay, you're serious about this?

> *Rich Mullins: Yeah!*

Interviewer: And obviously in music, right?

> *Rich Mullins: Yeah.*

Interviewer: Okay, I know it's a... well, it would be a stupid question, but I've got to ask.

> *Rich Mullins: That's what interviews are all about!*

Interviewer: As a teacher, Rich, you are going to be educating people, as far as what aspect of music, from a Christian standpoint?

> *Rich Mullins: Well, I think there's only one thing anybody teaches, and that is character. And I think that whether you are teaching history, math, or biology, or music, what you are really doing is, you are helping to shape the character of that person who is your student. And music is such a wonderful teaching tool, because while you are developing musical skills, that student can learn a lot about discipline, cooperation.*

Interviewer: As far as the aspect of the recording, will you balance the two?

> *Rich Mullins: Yeah.*

Interviewer: Good, I'm glad to hear that, because we really enjoy your music, and of

course, have been playing it for quite some time. Love your new single, 'The Just Shall Live.' Has a good message in it.

> *Rich Mullins: I am so glad you like it. Because that's the one song on this album that I... when it's all said and done, you listen back to your work and you kind of go, "Boy, did I say anything?" And that's the song that always jumps out at me as being something that really needs to be said today.*

Interviewer: Do you have any comments on Ross Perot?

> *Rich Mullins: Oh, is he back in the race?*

Interviewer: Still waiting on the word.

> *Rich Mullins: Well, I just think it's a shame that, out of a country with the population our size, we can't come up with a single candidate that is worth voting for.*

Transcribed by Robin Woodson

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